



HEALTHY FOOD AND BEVERAGE GUIDELINES

Marin Healthy Eating Active Living Food Now Taskforce is committed to supporting access to food that supports health for people and the planet. We encourage member agencies to adopt the following food guidelines as goals for all food provided to clients throughout the County of Marin.

We understand that all of us operate within a current food system that includes many unhealthy food products, that some of us are limited by what our food donors provide, and that we want to offer our partners and participants choices that meet their tastes, values and needs. Our hope is that Marin Food Now Taskforce members will adopt these guidelines knowing that we may not all meet all the guidelines 100% of the time.

Core Guidelines

100% of beverages should meet these Healthy Beverage Standards:

- Water no additives including vitamins, minerals, stimulants, and sweeteners
- Whole milk, 2% and/or 1% cow's milk with no added sweeteners
- Unsweetened non-dairy milk products (e.g., soy, rice, and other non-dairy milks)
- 100% fruit and vegetables juices
- Coffee and tea with no added caloric sweeteners
- No sodas or sugar sweetened beverages

75% of foods provided should meet these Healthy Food Standards:

- Vegetables; fruits; whole grains; nuts and seeds; legumes and lean proteins (animal- and vegetable based);
- Without trans-fats or added sugar;
Low in sodium (foods containing less than or equal to 5% daily value sodium per serving)
- Offered in appropriately sized portions (i.e. 3-ounce protein portions; ½ cup whole grains; ½ bagel or whole wheat English Muffin)
- Cooked food prepared by grilling, baking or sautéing with healthy fats; not deep-fried

Other Considerations:

- Provide gluten-free and vegan options when required or requested by participants

An Environmental Nutrition Lens

We acknowledge that our food system, our environment and the personal health of those we serve are interconnected. In an ideal world we would advocate for food that is locally sourced, seasonal, non-GMO, organic and free of antibiotics and growth hormones. These choices support both personal and environmental health today as well as for future generations.

At the same time, we recognize that our organizations have limited resources, that these products are not always available in quantities and at a cost that we can afford, and that as organizations committed to food security and health, we must balance nutritional goals with serving the most people in need that we can.

The following are aspirational goals which we believe are vital but which most of are not able to commit to currently.

- Provide locally sourced, seasonal, non-GMO and organic options whenever possible
- Source animal proteins raised without antibiotics or growth hormones
- Use recyclable or compostable packaging
- Compost all unused food

The following is information regarding code dates and safety of the product:

- ‘Best by dates’, ‘use by dates’ and the like indicate peak flavor and quality of a product, but do not indicate the safety of that product.
- With the exception of infant formula (the only one that is federally regulated) code dates on products are not regulated and can be confusing. People may feel compelled to toss food that is past its code date.
- A key part of our work is reducing food waste. For more detailed information about safe consumption of food using code date extension windows, please refer to Appendix C in the following document: <https://www.sfmfoodbank.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/SFMFB-Food-Sourcing-Policy.pdf>